

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /070 W  
-----031255Z 037684 /42

R 031106Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8640  
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMCONGEN HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2730

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, SEA, US  
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN SENATOR SAYS SOUTHEAST ASIA IS WORRIED  
ABOUT U.S. POLICY

1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS ON FEB 3 CARRIED INTERVIEW WITH  
AUSTRALIAN SENATOR PETER SIM WHO, PRESENTLY ON A TOUR OF  
SOUTHEAST ASIA, SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND CONCERN IN THE REGION  
ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE U.S. GIVING MASSIVE AID TO VIET-  
NAM. SIM, CHAIRMAN OF THE AUSTRALIAN SENATE STANDING COM-  
MITTEE ON DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MADE STATEMENT UPON  
DEPARTURE FOR THE PHILIPPINES; HE HAD PREVIOUSLY VISITED  
MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA AND IS DUE TO STOP IN SINGAPORE BEFORE  
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RETURNING TO CANBERRA. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, HE  
SAID, "I HAVE HAD CONCERN EXPRESSED TO ME ABOUT PRESIDENT  
CARTER'S POLICY TOWARDS SOUTHEAST ASIA." HE NOTED THAT  
PEOPLE WERE WORRIED THAT IF THE U.S. GAVE SUPPORT TO  
VIET-NAM WITHOUT EQUAL SUPPORT FOR NON-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST  
ASIAN COUNTRIES, HANOI WOULD BECOME OVERWHELMINGLY STRONG  
IN FIVE YEARS.

2. SIM ALSO REPORTED FOUND CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE AMERICAN FORCES WITHDRAWAL FROM SOUTH KOREA AND SUGGESTED THAT THE EFFECT OF SUCH A WITHDRAWAL ON JAPAN COULD BE "QUITE DRAMATIC". SPEAKING OF ASEAN, SIM STATED THAT HE HAD ENCOUNTERED A GENUINE DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN ASEAN AND THAT AUSTRALIA WAS PLACING GREATER EMPHASIS ON COOPERATION WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES. HE ALSO NOTED THAT ASEAN LEADERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT SINO-SOVIET DIFFERENCES, BUT "THE CHINESE SEE THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN ASIA AS A BALANCING FACTOR".

3. EMBOFF SPOKE WITH REUTERS REPORTER WHO HAD ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE AND SAID THAT SIM HAD, IN FACT, EXPRESSED MUCH MORE STRONGLY THE CONCERN FELT BY HIS CONTACTS THAN HAD APPEARED IN PRESS REPORTS. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION, AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN HIS IMPRESSION FROM ATTENDING PRESS CONFERENCE THAT SIM HAD MEANT TO STRESS SO HEAVILY THE CONCERN FELT ABOUT POSSIBLE U.S. ASSISTANCE TO VIET-NAM. AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF OPINED, "THEY'RE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT HUMANITARIAN AID BUT DO WORRY ABOUT MASSIVE RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE". AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF SAID THAT SIM HAD TOLD HIM THAT INDONESIAN OFFICIALS HAD BEEN QUITE WORRIED THAT THE U.S. MIGHT PULL ITS BASES OUT OF THE PHILIPPINES. AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF NOTED THAT SIM VISITS INDONESIA OFTEN AND KNOWS INDONESIA LEADERS WELL. ALTHOUGH NOT AS WELL CONNECTED IN THAILAND, SIM MET WITH PMAC SECRETARY-GENERAL KRIANGSAK, MFA UNDERSECRETARY WONG, NSC SECRETARY GENERAL SIT AND INTERIOR MINISTER SAMAK DURING HIS VISIT HERE.

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4. COMMENT: AS IS OFTEN THE PRACTICE HERE, A MESSAGE IS NOT DELIVERED DIRECTLY BUT THROUGH A THIRD PARTY WHO CAN BE TRUSTED TO DELIVER IT. WE FEEL THAT SIM WAS IN THIS CASE USED BY HIS SOUTHEAST ASIAN INTERLOCUTORS AS A MESSENGER. HIS MESSAGE AGAIN POINTS UP THE NEED FOR THE U.S. TO KEEP IN MIND THE EXTREME IMPORTANCE WITH WHICH OUR FRIENDS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA VIEW AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS VIET-NAM. THAI OFFICIALS HAVE REMARKED TO US THAT AN IMPROVEMENT IN U.S. RELATIONS WITH VIET-NAM IS A NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE STEP TOWARDS VIET-NAM'S BECOMING A LESS HOSTILE MEMBER OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY. HOWEVER, THEY CLEARLY WANT TO BE KEPT INFORMED.

WHITEHOUSE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, POLICIES, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, XC, US, (SIM, PETER)  
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**Review Markings:**  
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